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SUBJECT: SWEDISH EU PRESIDENCY TALKS TURKEY LEFTOVERS

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Classified By: POLCOUNS MARC KOEHLER FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Following a July 19 DVC between EUR DAS Matt Bryza and Swedish MFA Director of EU Affairs Lars Wahlund (reftel), PolOff meet with Peder Spangberg, Turkey Desk Officer on July 23 for follow-up. Spangberg said his ideal outcome from the EU Presidency on December 31 is "handing everything off with nothing broken." Spangberg said Sweden thinks it likely that only one, maybe two accession chapters will be opened during their time as EU President. He stated that Chapter 27 on the Environment was the most likely chapter. The Swedes plan to ask the Commission to present a public evaluation of Turkey's progress on all of the accession chapters in order to help secure a favorable progress report. End Summary

EU WORKING GROUP

¶2. (SBU) Spangberg confirmed that there is currently a working group of EU Member States in Ankara that meet regularly to coordinate their message to the Turks. The working group is composed of Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and Sweden. Spangberg noted that as the EU President, Sweden was not involved at this time in pushing "one agenda or another" and so is currently attending the working group meetings as observers. Despite press reports to the contrary, the group was deliberately not called a "Friends of Turkey" group because that would ultimately lead to a "Not-Friends of Turkey" group he said. Responding to a question on press reporting of a Cyprus working group, he said that none existed. Separately, Magnus Scholdtz, MFA European Correspondent, told Poloff that Sweden's Ambassador to Cyprus would be "carrying the water" on the issue during the Presidency, working with both sides of the island and even traveling soon to Turkey. The Ambassador is widely respected on the island, as he speaks Greek and Turkish, and is married to a Greek-Cypriot, noted Scholdtz.

OPENING NEW CHAPTERS

¶3. (C) Spangberg reiterated the message delivered during the DVC that the Swedes hope to open "one, two chapters if they were lucky." He confirmed that Chapter 27 on the Environment would be the most likely chapter, as it only requires the Executive Branch to change rules in order to agree with existing EU fuel standards. Sweden thinks there is no possibility of opening Chapter 8 on Competition Policy because it has difficult domestic political implications during the economic crisis. Spangberg said that Sweden had

been told that there was currently a group of Turkish lawyers trying to figure out how they can pass/propose laws that would make it possible to open Chapter 19 on Social Policy and Employment. The goal is to find a way to make the minimum changes required to open the acquis chapter while not opening Pandora's box to either Parliament (who will have to pass some laws, but the lawyers are hoping it will be a very narrow set) or the interest groups (which a full reform effort would entail). Chapter 26 on Education would require progress on the Cyprus issue, he noted. The Swedes think that if Turkey dropped its objection to Cyprus being admitted to the OECD, the other two issues with opening the education chapter will fall into place. Sweden thinks there is no chance to open Chapter 15 on Energy because of the competing exploratory drilling expeditions from both Turkey and Cyprus. Spangberg confirmed that as of Tuesday, July 21, Cyprus and Greece had placed the issue of Turkish exploration in the Aegean Sea on the "Any Other Business" agenda for the July 27-28 GAERC.

PROGRESS REPORT

14. (C) Spangberg talked about Sweden's plans for Turkey's Annual Progress Report from the Commission. The Swedes will ask the Commission to present Turkish progress on each chapter to the Council. The Swedes (and the Turks) have felt that the Enlargement Policy and Communication (EPC) Directorate has only been issuing releases and talking about Croatia's progress (though not anymore, he noted). No public announcements have been made about Turkey's progress on chapters, including some that were opened years ago, because there were no intermediate bench marks to publicize. Sweden wanted the Commission to publicize to the Council how much progress Turkey has made. Spangberg said the annual Progress Report for Turkey was currently scheduled to be presented to the Council in mid-October, but the Swedes had seen the deadline pushed back before.

Parliamentary Issues

15. (C) Sweden is very upset that the Turkish Parliament was out of session until October 1, Spangberg said. He said that there were a few significant things currently going on in Turkey that if they bore fruit would be very helpful in securing a favorable annual review. Sweden was told that a reform working group had been set-up composed of four ministers, including the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Justice, who are trying to create proposals for judicial reform. Spangberg said it would be very helpful if the proposals were made public before the review and were seen to have political support from both Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Parliament. The Swedes had also been told that the MFA had been working with the lawyers to figure out how some chapters could be opened without involving Parliament.

SILVERMAN